

# **IASCP, 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial conference**

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## **Sahel: Safeguarding marginal lands through recognition of local land use**

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# CONTENT

1. Presentation of Mauritania Technology Fosters Tradition (TFT)
2. Knowledge: Management and systems
3. Property rights
4. Drivers and trends
5. Some conclusions

# 1. Presentation of TFT, Overview

- Location, environment and people
- Objective and character
- Law and legal paradigms
- Methodology and approach
- Output
- Scales, stakeholders and epistemology
- Partners
- Code Pastoral

# Location, environment and people

- Location
  - SE Mauritania, near town of Aioun
- Environment and ecology
  - Semi desert and ephemeral wetlands
  - Isohyet for 400 mm precipitation moves south
- People
  - Mostly Maure and Haratins/Black Maure, some black Africans

# Objective and character

- Objective
  - Document and formalize traditional property- and use rights to natural resources, specifically rangelands, together with local people, and through using GIS/GPS and ICTs
- Character of operation
  - Not investment, but research-cum-action

# Law and legal paradigms

- Legal pluralism
  - Traditional law, Islamic law, French law
  - Problems of application and co-existence
- Characteristics of codes
  - Written and unwritten
  - Roles for interpretation and use
  - Applicable to a certain area or scale of culture/society

# Approach

- Area assessment (survey)
- Identify land-use (interviews)
- Codify in local languages, translate into Arabic and French
- Establish a legal rural registry
- Set up new national co-management institutions
- Create GIS map, publish on Internet

# Methodology

- To be adapted to purpose and location
- Mix of qual. and quant.:
  - Focus groups, interviews, surveys, ICTs, GIS/GPS, satellite imagery
- Participatory Research Mapping (PRM)
  - local people help identify research issues and collect data
  - Elements: (1) socio-economic survey, (2) toponymy, (3) resource use, (4) property rights

# Output

- Body of trad. knowledge pertaining to natural resource management.  
Available in print form in relevant languages and on the Internet
- Institutional and legal reform
- Decrease in the amount of conflicts
- Dissemination elsewhere in the Sahel
- World Bank policy paper

# Partners

The partners (at the present time):

- External
  - CBNRM Net, GLIN (and NASA), GTZ, World Bank
- Domestic
  - Government

# Scales, stakeholders and epistemology

Users and beneficiaries at various scales:



**Global** - Donors, Law comm., Sahel countries

**National** - Donors, Govt., Public sector

**Regional** - Courts, Donors, Regional adm.

**Local** - Donors, Farmers, Herders, Trad. leaders

## 2. Knowledge: Management and systems, Overview

- What is knowledge?
- Characteristics of knowledge
- Knowledge management
- Stakeholders: Societal sectors, relations and co-management
- Knowledge systems

# Knowledge vs. information, ethics, power and empowerment

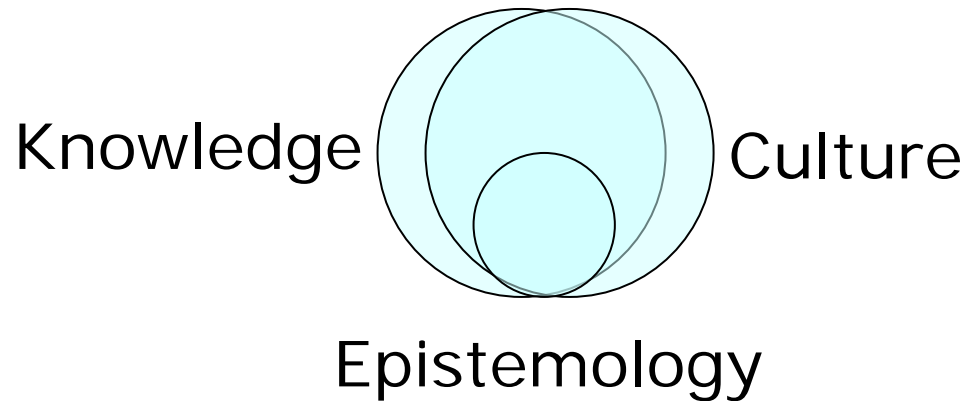
“In the terms of modern communication theory, information ... is everywhere, but knowledge can occur only within the eco-systemic context of a goalseeking adaptive system peopled by goalseeking subsystems. If this is the case, then we are required to ask how the knowledge has been coded and filtered; and what it is being used for, and for whom.”  
(Anthony Wilden)

# What is knowledge, 1?

- Broad view: the sum total of a culture's accumulated experience, incl. transfer, views on itself, the environment, and relationships with the environment
- Knowledge and culture
  - Knowledge is part and parcel of culture
- Knowledge and epistemology
  - Epistemology as a theory of nature and the grounds for knowledge, including its limits and validity, is part of a culture's knowledge

# What is knowledge, 2?

Relations between knowledge, culture and epistemology:



# Characteristics of knowledge

Knowledge is understood a set of overlapping and dichotomized variables, that operate between and within scales:

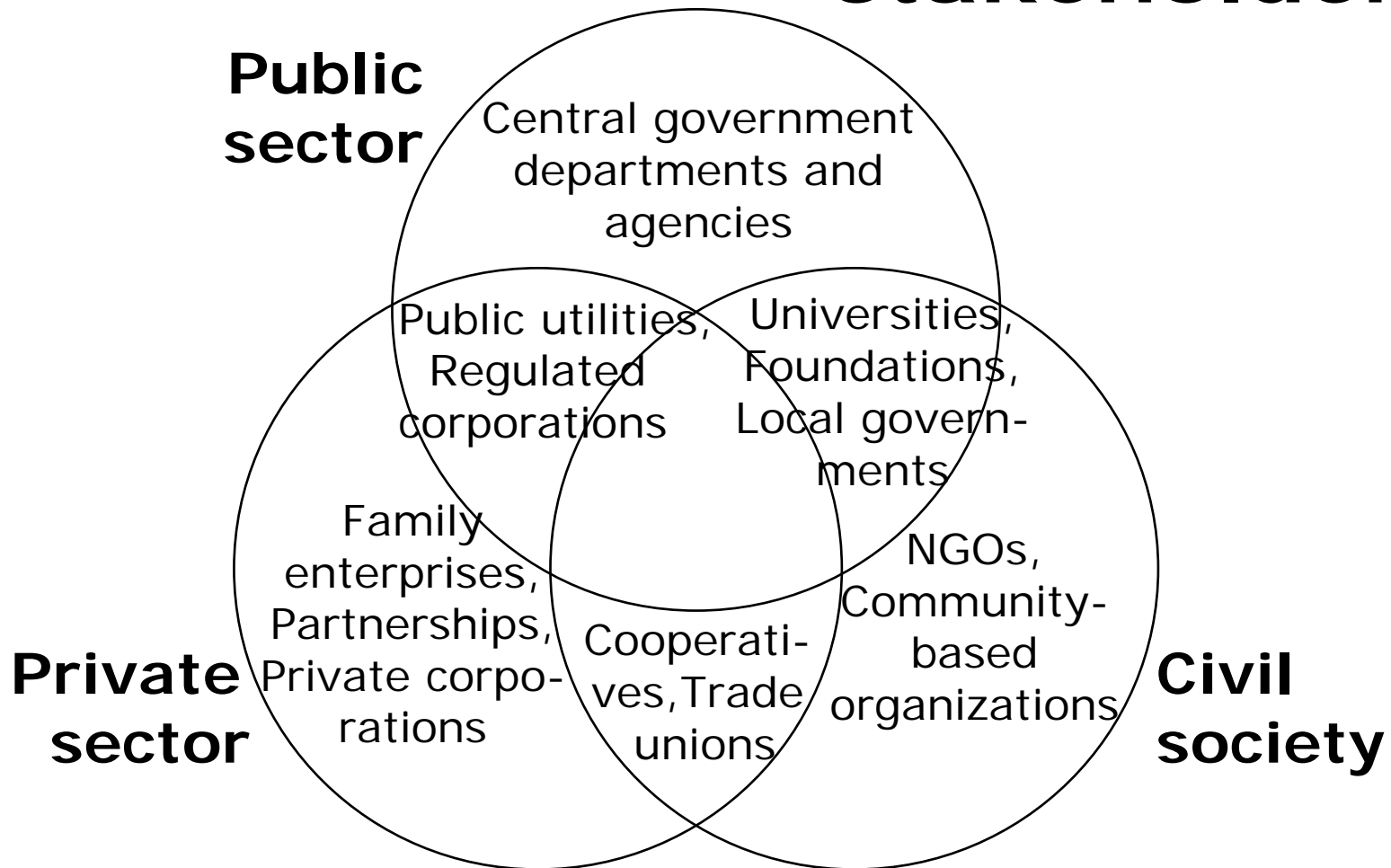
- Absolute  $\longleftrightarrow$  Relative
- Abstract  $\longleftrightarrow$  Concrete
- External  $\longleftrightarrow$  Internal
- General  $\longleftrightarrow$  Specific
- Objective  $\longleftrightarrow$  Subjective

# Knowledge management

Aspects of managing knowledge within and between scales:

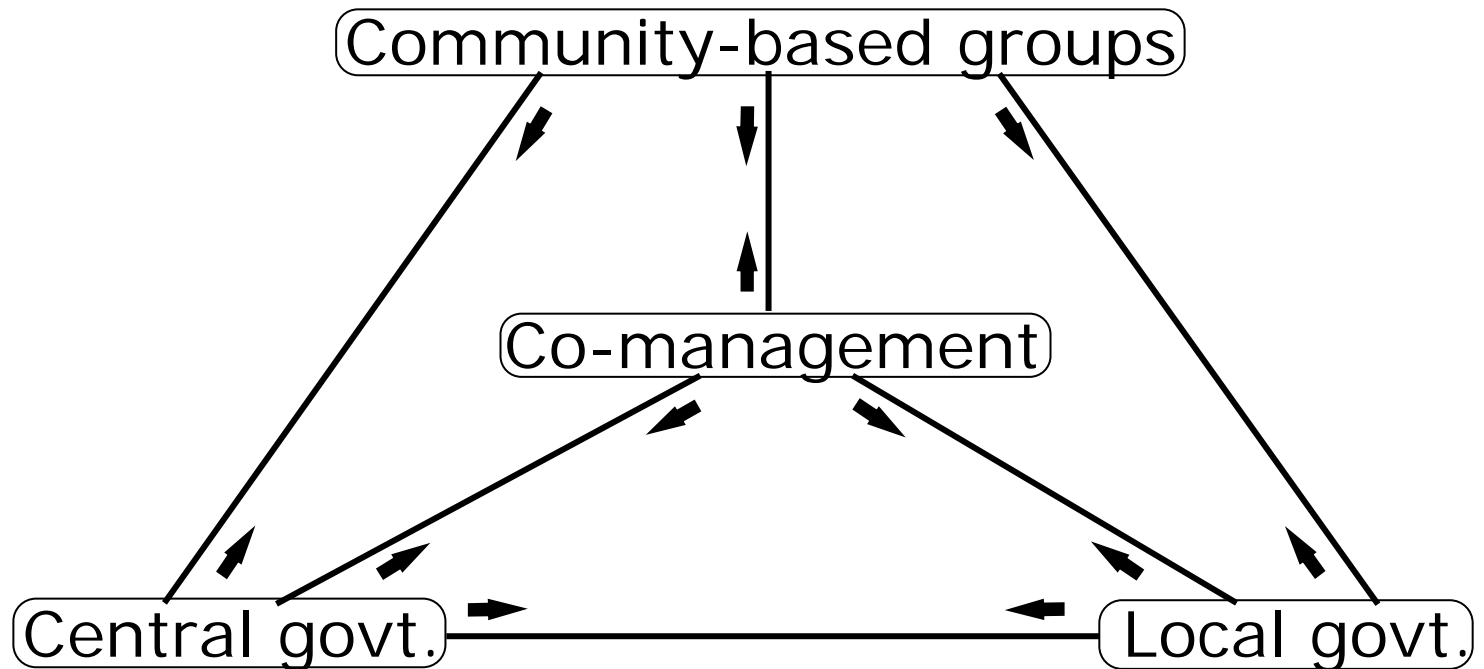
- Dimensions
  - With whom to share, what to share, how to share
- Tasks
  - Collection, evaluation, categorization, storage, retrieval, dissemination, as well as production of new knowledge

# Societal sectors and stakeholders



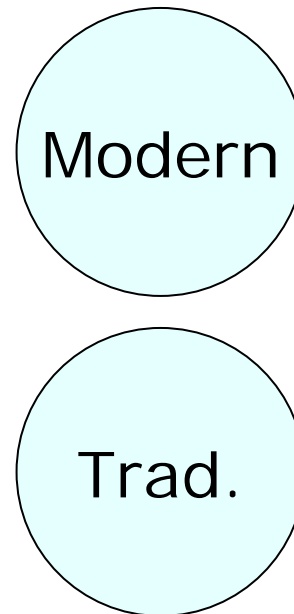
# Stakeholders

Relations between key stakeholders:



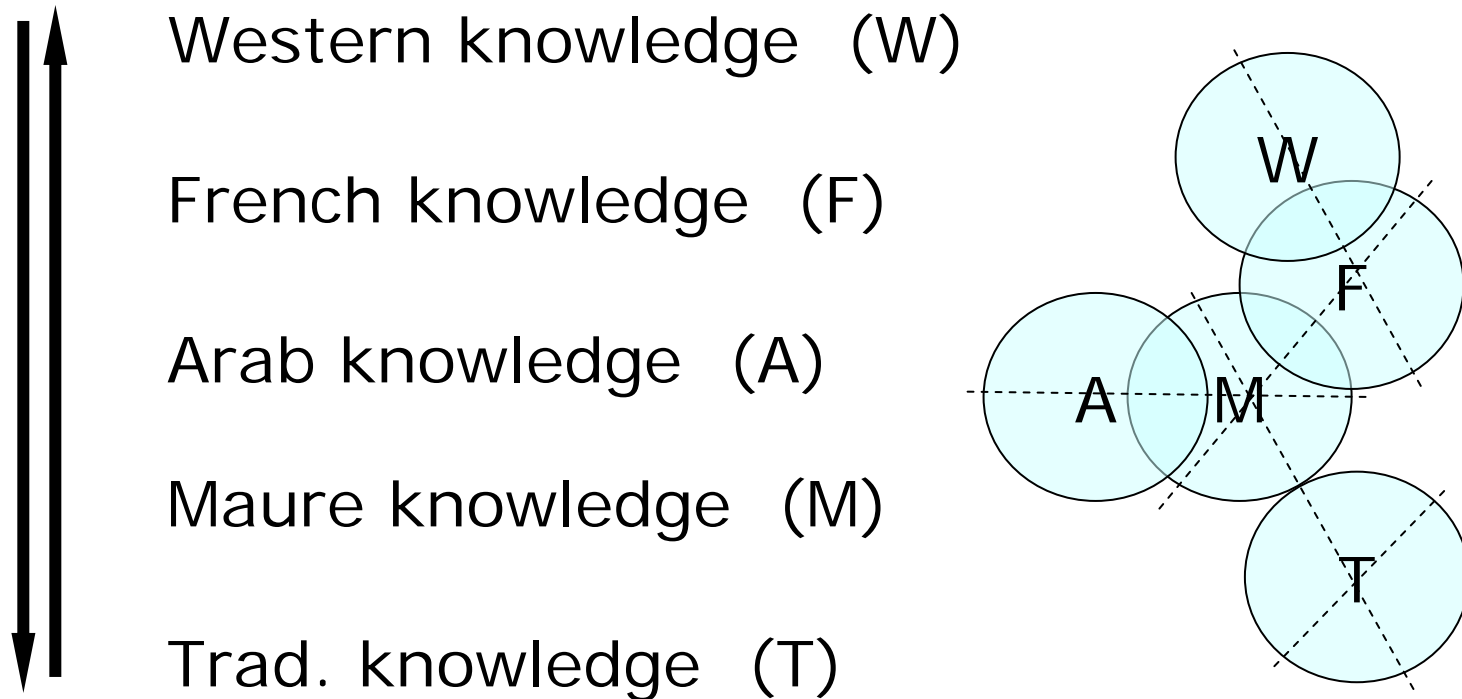
# Knowledge systems: Traditional view

Two types, with different knowledge, for separate use, by separate stakeholders, and vertically related:



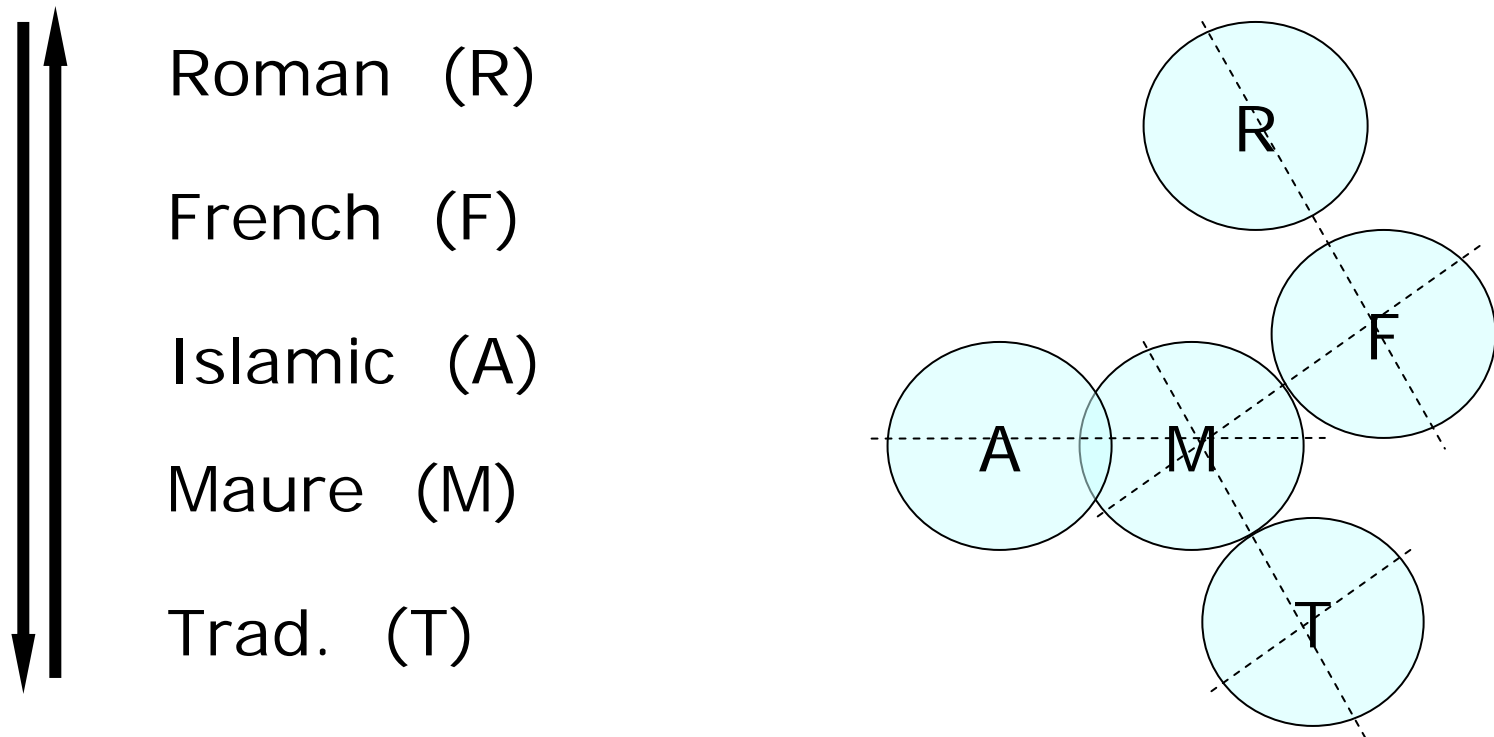
# Knowledge systems in Mauritania

Knowledge systems and relations:



# Legal paradigms in Mauritania

Legal paradigms and relations:



# 3. Property rights, Overview

- Role of pastoralism
- Role of history
- Evolution of the system
  - Rulers and ruled
  - Colonial legacy
  - Islam, or Sharia, and NRM
- Outcome
- Analyses: etymology and systemic changes

# Pastoralism and history

The present property rights system cannot be understood without understanding the role of pastoralism and history:

- The key usage of the resources has always been pastoralism, and the way in which this livelihood has adapted to the local environment
- History: immigrations, wars, rulers

# Evolution of the system

- Done through understanding the evolution of pastoralism
- Rulers and ruled: local politics
- The role of the French
- Sharia and NRM

# Outcome

- A system that was well adapted to the specific character of the ecosystem
- Emphasis on making resources available to those that needed it
- A non-equilibrium system

# Analysis: Etymology

- Key terminology in 3-4 languages:
  - Arabic/Hassanya, French and English
- Arabic/Hassanya: moulkiyah
  - Owned by a person on behalf of somebody
- French/English: property
  - Owned by a person
- Other terms: property right, ownership
  - Do not convey the fluid character of the relationships between people and resources

# Analysis: Systemic changes

- The trad. property rights system was a common property system for the then users, the members of the Maure tribe Ould Nacer, Faction Wahib
- The lack of a fit between the trad. system and today's situation is growing.
- Today the situation can be characterized as open access

# 4. Drivers and trends

- Drivers vs. trends
- Drivers
  - Driver 1: population increase
  - Driver 2: desertification

# Trends, I

These trends are partly overlapping, and the causalities are complex:

- Ecological system under stress
- Deforestation
- Decentralization and role of the State
- Diminishing role of traditional law
- Privatization
  - Of land (fencing)
  - Of water (dams, access to wells)

# Trends, II

- Change in production systems
- Absentee pastoralism/agriculture
- Sedentarization
- Valuation of land
- Infrastructure developments
- Increase in conflicts
- Increased focus on biodiversity
  - RAMSAR

# 5. Some conclusions, Overview

- Modern law making in Mauritania
- Institutions and institutional analysis
- Power and empowerment
- Scaling legal paradigms

# Code Pastoral

An example of law-making:

- National law on nomadism/herders, initiated by local NGO, supported by GTZ/World Bank
- Characteristics: Participatory process followed, Based on Sharia/trad. law, Good language that is easily understood, Conflict resolution mechanism
- TFT aims to implement it in its project area, and emulate its drafting methodology

# Institutions and institutional analysis

- Understood both as organizations and in the sense of institutional economics
- Facilitates and constrains the flow of knowledge and data between scales
- Important for understanding and assessing power and empowerment

# Power and empowerment

The way to address power – and achieve empowerment – follows largely from the methodological approaches chosen:

- Ethics - knowledge to be used by whom and for what?
- Consensus-building, Consultation, Participation, Governance, Involvement, Transparency, etc.
- Trad. knowledge as both means and goal
- Scaling of knowledge has to be a bottoms-up approach

# Scaling legal paradigms

On each scale three operations are involved in dealing with knowledge:

- Interpretation
  - Analysis of incoming knowledge/data
- Transformation
  - Adaptation to present scale
- Translation
  - Enabling transfer to next scale

# Flow chart: Scaling legal paradigms

